



State of Arizona  
Department of Education

Tom Horne  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction

To: District Superintendents  
Charter Administrators  
Principals

From: Kathleen Wiebke  
Deputy Associate Superintendent for Highly Qualified Professionals

Date: Wednesday, September 29, 2004

Subject: NCLB/HQ 05-01: Arizona's Highly Qualified Teachers  
No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) 2001

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Attached you will find materials designed to provide assistance with the implementation of the Highly Qualified requirements for teachers in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. Under the guidelines of NCLB, to be considered "highly qualified," teachers must meet certain criteria. These guidelines were effective Fall 2003 for teachers in Title I schools or who are paid from Title I funds. All other teachers have until the end of the 2005-2006 school year to meet NCLB guidelines. The purpose of these materials is to assist teachers in meeting these federally mandated guidelines. Below you will find a summary of the enclosed materials:

**Arizona Highly Qualified Teachers Attestation:** The first form entitled "Arizona Highly Qualified Teachers Attestation" presents a short checklist of the requirements of NCLB, and should be completed on annual basis. Under the guidelines, teachers must have a bachelor's degree. They must also hold a valid state certificate (charter school teachers are exempt from this particular requirement). In addition, they must demonstrate subject matter competency, and this can be accomplished through a variety of measures (see item 3). If a teacher is not able to demonstrate competency through the measures in item three and he or she has **three years of teaching experience**, the teacher would then move to the *Rubric for Arizona's High, Objective, Uniform, State Standard of Evaluation*.

**Rubric for Arizona's High, Objective, Uniform, State Standard of Evaluation (AZ HOUSSE):** NCLB allows each state to create a HOUSSE as an alternative to demonstrate subject matter competency. A task force comprised of superintendents, teachers, and principals representing charter schools, public schools, and higher education, as well as other stakeholders, created the HOUSSE document. In light of the feedback we received from teachers and administrators across Arizona, we believe this is a good compromise. Superintendent Horne wanted the task force to work with schools and districts to meet the federal guidelines, while at the same time making this document as inclusive as possible. It represents a start to defining a truly highly qualified professional.

Teachers are to complete this rubric through a process of self-reflection. If a teacher receives a score of 100 points or more, he or she meets the subject matter competency of NCLB.

**Instructions for Completing the Arizona Highly Qualified Rubric:** These instructions will assist a teacher in the completion of both forms. We have also included a Glossary of Terms as they relate to NCLB to assist principals and teachers. Please note that if a teacher meets the criteria outlined on the first page, they do not need to move to the Rubric. The rubric is completed annually until the teacher earns 100 points. It is important to note that if a teacher at the middle and high school level teaches multiple subjects, this process must be completed for *each* subject.

Once a teacher has completed these forms, he or she submits the signed attestation, along with the rubric (if necessary) to the building administrator.

**Frequently Asked Questions:** As we have shared this material with teachers, administrators, and other educational professionals, several questions have come up. We have attempted to answer and clarify those questions within the documentation. However, we have also included some of the most frequently asked questions.

**Arizona Highly Qualified Teachers Verification of Compliance:** This form is the only one that building principals need to complete and submit to their district office. Each school needs to retain a copy of this form along with copies of the individual teacher's signed attestations in the school office. Individual schools will submit only the Verification of Compliance to the district office. These records will be made available to the public upon request.

**Sample Letters to Parents:** Newly hired teachers working in Title I schools, or who work in a program supported by Title I Part A funds must be "highly qualified" at the start of the 2003-2004 school year. Parents must be notified if a teacher who does not currently meet the NCLB "highly qualified" requirements has taught their children for a period of four or more consecutive weeks. These sample letters may be adapted for each school's needs.

**Sample Notice to Parents:** Parents of students attending a school that receives Title I funds must be notified on an *annual* basis of their right to request information on the qualifications of their student's classroom teacher. This includes whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects taught; whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency certificate; information on the teacher's degree major and the field discipline of the certification or degree; whether the child receives services from paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications. This *sample* notification may be used to accommodate this requirement if you so desire.

**Rural Flexibility:** The U.S. Department of Education has recognized that often, teachers in rural areas are required to teach more than one academic subject due to teacher shortages. Under the new policy for rural flexibility, teachers in eligible rural districts who are highly qualified in at least one subject will have three years to become highly qualified in the additional subjects they teach. The list of eligible rural districts can be found at <http://ed.gov/programs/reapsrsa/eligible04/index.html>.

We want teachers who teach Arizona's children to have the necessary depth of knowledge to help children develop deep and meaningful educational experiences. Children are inspired to learn from teachers who are passionate about the content and who engage their students in active inquiry and exploration. Teachers with an in-depth knowledge of content are better able to make the critical instructional decisions that high quality teaching and learning demands. While the Arizona Department of Education needs to ensure compliance, our number one goal will always be that of service. Should you have any questions or concerns you may contact Erika Wesley, Education Program Specialist for Title II, at 602.364.2192 or at [ewesley@ade.az.gov](mailto:ewesley@ade.az.gov).

Attachments